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REPORT OF THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL

THE SITUATION IN CENTRAL AMERICA: THREATS TO INTERNATIONAL PEACE AND SECURITY AND PEACE INITIATIVES

DEVELOPMENT AND INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC CO-OPERATION

UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON ENVIRONMENT AND DEVELOPMENT

INTERNATIONAL CO-OPERATION FOR THE ERADICATION OF POVERTY IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

EXTERNAL DEBT CRISIS AND DEVELOPMENT

OPERATIONAL ACTIVITIES FOR DEVELOPMENT

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD

INTERNATIONAL ACTION TO COMBAT DRUG ABUSE AND ILLICIT TRAFFICKING

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE COMMITMENTS AND POLICIES FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT CO-OPERATION AGREED UPON IN THE DECLARATION ON INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC CO-OPERATION, IN PARTICULAR THE REVITALIZATION OF ECONOMIC GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

Letter dated 26 October 1990 from the Permanent Representative
of Venezuela to the United Nations addressed to the
Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit to you herewith the documents issued by the Presidents of the Rio Group on the occasion of the Presidential Meeting of the Permanent Mechanism for Consultation and concerted Political Action, held at Caracas on 11 and 12 October 1990.

I should be grateful if you would have this letter and its annex distributed as a document of the General Assembly under agenda items 12, 28, 79, 80, 82, 83, 84, 97, 108 and 148.

(Signed) Andrés AGUILAR M.
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

ANNEX

CARACAS DECLARATION

The Presidents of the Permanent Mechanism for Consultation and Concerted Political Action, known as the Rio Group, meeting at Caracas on 11 and 12 October 1990, agreed that the consolidation of democracy in Latin America and the progress being made in regional and subregional integration and co-operation are strengthening the region's ability to participate in the new world order that is emerging as a result of far-reaching international changes that have taken place in the past year.

The Presidents agreed as follows:

A. COMPOSITION OF THE MECHANISM

To admit Bolivia and Paraguay immediately. Also, to invite the Central American countries to participate in the Group's work through a country which they shall designate as their co-ordinator, and the countries of the Caribbean Community to participate through the country occupying the presidency of the Community.

The Rio Group thus became more broad-based and its integration mission and democratic character were reaffirmed.

B. LATIN AMERICAN INTEGRATION

To express their satisfaction at the recent developments in subregional integration in which the countries of our Group are directly involved. To give their strongest support to the recent commitments to the integration of the Southern Cone and the Andean subregion, and to bilateral integration and free-trade agreements.

It is encouraging to note that, during the past year the guidelines adopted at the summit meeting at Ica, Peru, which were to be implemented through negotiations in the Latin American Integration Association (LAIA), were followed.

To reiterate, the pressing need to accelerate and expand regional and subregional integration arrangements that are consistent with the objectives of LAIA for the creation of a Latin American economic grouping.

C. CO-OPERATION WITH RESPECT TO ENERGY

In considering the special impact of the Gulf crisis on the energy and economic situation of the countries of the Group, agreement was reached to move forward, on a priority basis, with a study of the possibilities for energy complementarity in the region. In that connection, they decided to consider:

(a) measures which could be taken at the earliest possible date to reduce the impact of a prolongation of the crisis;

(b) the potential for energy self-sufficiency in the region.

To that end, to request an immediate, comprehensive study by the Latin American Energy Organization (OLADE) of the region's energy situation, covering the various sources of energy available in Latin America.

The study will be conducted over a period of three (3) months. To ensure its timely completion, the countries of the Rio Group will provide OLADE with technical staff specialized in the various sources of energy and the necessary financial resources to cover the costs of the study.

D. RAW MATERIALS

To begin the necessary consultations on launching a strategic fund for investment and the promotion of integration in Latin America, made up of resources from price increases for raw materials.

E. THE AMERICAS INITIATIVE

To express their support for the Americas Initiative proposed by the President of the United States which, for the first time links the issues of debt, trade and investment, and to reaffirm their belief that the implementation of this Initiative should enable hemispheric relations to develop on equitable bases. The Initiative should also be compatible with our own Latin American integration and co-operation efforts.

To exchange information regularly on action taken by our countries under the Americas Initiative with a view to establishing a general framework of negotiating principles and guidelines.

To take note that the Initiative proposes certain activities in connection with the Uruguay Round negotiations which may be of interest to Latin America, and to propose that a working meeting to identify common ground be held at Geneva between Latin American negotiators and negotiators from the United States and Canada, following the regional consultation provided for within the framework of the Latin American Economic System (SELA).

F. THE URUGUAY ROUND

To express their conviction that it is essential that the Uruguay Round conclude successfully. Likewise, to make a special appeal that the parties reach an agreement which reflects the basic interests of the developing countries and promotes improved functioning of the multilateral trading system on which to base increased trade flows and the prosperity of our economies. In this context, an understanding on agricultural issues must be reached.

G. ENVIRONMENT

To affirm, in considering the question of the environment, the need to rise once and for all above emotional and irrational attitudes in discussing an issue which is absolutely fundamental to the future of mankind.

To advocate a national debate, free from recrimination, as the only means of establishing effective guidelines for international co-operation. Co-operation between industrialized and developing countries is essential and, in this context, the developed countries have an absolute obligation to guarantee access on favourable terms to clean technologies and to sources of funding.

To note that issues requiring urgent consideration include the preservation of fisheries resources in fragile, vulnerable ecosystems and the adoption of a common policy for the region concerning accident prevention and the elimination of radioactive, toxic and hazardous wastes.

To announce the holding of two "river rallies" in connection with the idea of promoting understanding of the environment, as described in the annex to this Declaration.

H. THE LATIN AMERICAN INTEGRATION ASSOCIATION

To instruct their representatives in the Latin American Integration Association (LAIA) that a duly objective and independent evaluation should be made of the organization at the earliest possible date to determine what measures are necessary to achieve the flexibility and effectiveness required by the current prospects for Latin American integration, in accordance with the 10-point agenda agreed to as part of this Declaration.

I. THE INTER-AMERICAN SYSTEM

To draw attention to the need for a critical analysis of all the various kinds of agencies existing at the regional level.

To urge members from Rio Group countries who are members of the study group on the inter-American system appointed by the Secretary-General of the Organization of American States to hold a meeting among themselves to compare and harmonize their views on ways of strengthening the inter-American system and making it more effective.

J. DIALOGUE WITH THE EUROPEAN ECONOMIC COMMUNITY

To express their interest in the possibility that the European Economic Community might formulate initiatives designed to ensure the development of its economic relations and co-operation with Latin America, along the lines proposed in New York in the dialogue between Foreign Ministers of the Community and the Group.

K. SUPPORT FOR PERU

To welcome with interest the Co-operation Agreement with Peru adopted by the Andean Presidential Council on 9 August 1990. To express, in that connection, their readiness to co-ordinate with all due urgency the support which Latin America must provide to the Peruvian people in order to ease their economic plight and to contribute to the success of the economic stabilization programme launched by the Government of President Alberto Fujimori.

L. GLOBAL DIALOGUE OF OIL PRODUCERS AND CONSUMERS

To express their support for the proposal put forward by the President of Venezuela in the United Nations General Assembly that a meeting between oil-producing and oil-consuming countries be held at the earliest possible date to find a lasting global solution to problems related to this raw material so essential to the world economy and to establish the terms of the world hydrocarbons market on the basis of concerted action that is equitable for both producers and consumers.

M. PROTECTION OF CHILDREN

To reaffirm the commitment made at the recent World Summit for Children and, to that end, to allocate the resources needed to create the social, material and spiritual conditions necessary for children to attain full physical and intellectual development.

N. ILLICIT DRUG TRAFFICKING

To adopt the Joint Communiqué on action to combat illicit trafficking in narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances which forms part of this document.

O. MEETING OF IBERO-AMERICAN HEADS OF STATE

To express their interest in attending the meetings of Ibero-American Heads of State convened by Mexico for 1991, Spain for 1992 and Brazil for 1993.

P. VENUE OF THE NEXT MEETING

To reconvene in Colombia in the second half of 1991, in Argentina in 1992 and in Brazil in 1993.

Q. FINAL DOCUMENT

The Presidents endorsed the document submitted to them by their Ministers for Foreign Affairs.

The Presidents of Argentina, Brazil, Colombia, Chile, Ecuador, Mexico, Peru and Uruguay thanked the people and Government of Venezuela for their warm hospitality.

Appendix I

Joint communiqué of the Presidents of the countries members of
the Rio Group on action to combat illicit trafficking in
narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances

We the Presidents of the countries members of the Rio Group wish to affirm to the Latin American and international communities our serious concern about the effects and consequences of drug-trafficking and drug-related terrorism. We do not hesitate to qualify that international crime and all activities related to it, as the most dangerous threat to social cohesion, the observance of human rights, the well-being of peoples, democratic stability, economic development and peace. We have decided to give special priority to the speedy application of measures which will permit effective regional and multilateral action - and, at the same time, to take the necessary political steps to enable the international community and the industrialized nations affected by drug consumption to assume their responsibilities in that area.

Bearing in mind that we are resolutely and firmly taking action to combat the production, processing, trafficking and distribution of drugs, we believe that we are in a position to demand that the entire international community and all consumer countries adopt genuine strategies to control demand. We view with anxiety the fact that, while drug consumption in the United States has apparently begun to drop, in other parts of the world, such as Europe and Japan, there has been an alarming increase in illicit drug use. In global terms, the problem has not abated; on the contrary, it seems to be growing.

We emphatically reject all attempts to lay the blame for this scourge on one country or group of countries. We also consider unacceptable any attempt to impose anti-drug policies unilaterally or to make aid or economic support contingent on arbitrary criteria of performance in the war on drugs.

The global strategy to combat drugs should be comprehensive and in keeping with the special nature of the phenomenon. The problem will not go away, even if battles are won in one or more countries, as long as the international community as a whole does not act decisively and energetically. Resolute action is needed not only in the area of drug consumption but also with respect to money laundering, arms trafficking, the illegal sale of chemical precursors and the pursuit of distribution cartels in the major cities of the industrialized countries.

Our solidarity with the countries most affected by this problem is not just lip service. At the same time, we believe that the assistance provided cannot be exclusively military. Political, trade, economic and social co-operation is needed to promote alternative development and to offset the costs incurred by the peoples involved in this struggle. We therefore appreciate the gesture made by President Bush in submitting to Congress for consideration the system of trade preferences known as the "Andean Initiative". We encourage the United States Congress to support and adopt that proposal. We also call upon the European Economic Community to take up his proposal to include the Andean countries for a period of time in the preferential trade treatment grant to the least developed countries.

With regard to regional measures, we the Presidents of the countries members of the Rio Group have agreed to:

Establish a commission of legal experts - one from each country - to design a criminal law framework which will serve as a basis for co-ordinating domestic legislation against drug-trafficking in all member countries;

Promote studies and the necessary technical discussions to set up, with the guidance and advice of the United Nations, an international criminal jurisdiction with respect to drug-trafficking;

Increase consultations and the exchange of information on drug-trafficking and related activities in our countries;

Support the proposal made by Colombia in the United Nations to hold, next year, an international conference on money laundering and illegal trafficking in chemical products used in the processing of drugs.

ENVIRONMENT

In order to expand the use of rivers as links between countries of our continent and to call world attention to the importance of South American waterways and the feasibility of their physical integration, we agree to consider, as part of efforts to link South American rivers, the holding of two sports competitions:

(a) the "Orinoco-Plata river rally", with a starting point on the Orinoco River to be determined later, passing through Brazil and Paraguay and ending in Buenos Aires;

(b) the "Atlantic-to-the-Pacific river rally", starting in Belém, passing through Manaus in Brazil and Iquitos in Peru, and ending in a city on the Pacific.

The rallies will provide a good opportunity for the international community to become better acquainted with our natural wealth, our rivers and our flora, thereby contributing to a heightened awareness of the need for their preservation.

GUIDELINES FOR THE LATIN AMERICAN INTEGRATION ASSOCIATION

The Technical Secretariat of the Latin American Integration Association (LAIA) is requested to carry out, together with an ad hoc group of experts to be appointed by the member countries of the Rio Group, an analysis of the compatibility of the rules and provisions of the Treaty of Montevideo, and of the mechanisms for implementing them, with the new trading situation within and outside the region, in the light of the following points proposed to LAIA by the President of Mexico:

1. The inclusion of a broad range of products in trade agreements, which has already begun with the agreement to reduce lists of exceptions.

2. The elaboration of a timetable for tariff reductions so that, in keeping with the principle of gradualism, a clear trend towards effective openness which stimulates trade flows is established from the very beginning, followed by expansion of the regional tariff preference and the fixing of tariff ceilings or equivalent mechanisms.

3. The need to ensure that the reduction of lists of exceptions puts the already agreed elimination of non-tariff barriers into effect.

4. Commitment to a timetable for the elimination of export subsidies and discriminatory and inequitable fiscal charges, in order to ensure equitable cost structures and full use of our comparative advantages.

5. The removal of transportation obstacles to foreign trade in order to reduce costs and ensure greater flows within the region.

6. The drafting of clear and strict rules to avoid misinterpretations which might distort the purposes of our trade agreements.

7. The establishment of transparent temporary safeguard mechanisms capable of reacting quickly to unforeseen phenomena.

8. Agreement on flexible and impartial procedures, based on clear principles of justice, for settling trade disputes; such procedures should provide prompt solutions without obstructing trade flows.

9. The establishment of specific, ongoing programmes for promoting trade and investment which will bring our business communities closer together.

10. The need to ensure compatibility between subregional integration agencies and LAIA's principles of overall integration, so that the natural make-up of Latin America's economic areas stimulates trade and investment relations throughout the region.

Appendix II

Final Document of the Fourth Presidential Meeting of the Permanent Mechanism for Consultation and Concerted Political Action

In view of the profound transformations which have taken place in the world since the Third Presidential Meeting of the Permanent Mechanism for Consultation and Concerted Political Action, held at Ica, Peru, the growing role of our countries in international economic and political life needs to be reaffirmed. The consolidation of the democratic transition process and the progress achieved in the area of regional and subregional integration and co-operation justify our confidence in our ability to confront the situation created by the new world order.

THE WORLD SITUATION

The sweeping political changes taking place throughout the world - particularly the understanding reached between the Soviet Union and the United States of America, the transformation of military alliances, the intensification of European integration, the events in Eastern Europe, the unification of Germany and the strengthening of the South-South dialogue - are shaping a new international reality in which the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations retain their full validity and must prevail as rules of conduct for States.

The trend towards globalization and the formation and consolidation of large economic groupings are also transforming international relations and dictate that relationships between countries and groups of countries be redefined.

Furthermore, a democratic world order must be achieved through the effective involvement of all members of the international community. It is essential that this new climate lead to a revitalization of international co-operation that will enable our countries to meet the challenges of modernization in order to achieve economic and social development.

At the same time, we are aware that the present moment, while affording new opportunities, is not free from genuine threats to international security, as the current Gulf crisis attests.

We reiterate that the actions of all States, regardless of their size or importance, must be strictly bound by the norms and principles of international law, which are the guarantee of peaceful coexistence for all members of the international community. Nothing entitles a State to contravene these norms and principles. This is the very least that can be required of any effort to turn the years of confrontation into a period of real dialogue and concerted international action.

Our countries continue to suffer the consequences of phenomena which generate instability and conflict, such as extreme poverty, external debt and drug trafficking. These problems call for the consolidation of an international

framework that will facilitate their solution. In the face of these threats, we reaffirm our commitment to democracy, development and social justice.

INTEGRATION AND CONCERTED POLITICAL ACTION IN LATIN AMERICA

The growing articulation of regional interests and the consolidation of the Latin American community will expand our capacity for dialogue and negotiation and enhance Latin America's effectiveness in the international system.

In this connection, we attach special importance to the work done by the Rio Group as the Permanent Mechanism for Consultation and Concerted Political Action and as our spokesman with countries and groups of countries from other regions.

We reiterate the pressing need to accelerate and expand regional and subregional integration arrangements that are consistent with the objectives of the Latin American Integration Association (LAIA) for the creation of a Latin American economic grouping and compatible with efforts to expand and liberalize trade in the hemisphere. We agree to act with the greatest political commitment in providing support to existing bodies and in the search for innovative mechanisms to stimulate ongoing initiatives and facilitate their harmonization and convergence at the regional level.

To this end we will promote the co-ordination of Latin American co-operation and integration organizations in order to avoid any duplication of effort and make optimum use of available efforts and resources.

We are heartened to note that, during the past year, the guidelines adopted at the summit meeting at Ica, Peru, which were to be implemented through negotiations in LAIA, have been followed, and we welcome the recent developments in the area of subregional integration, in which the countries of our Group are directly involved. We fully support the recent commitments made for the integration of the Southern Cone and the Andean subregion as well as bilateral integration and free-trade agreements.

We also wish to state the need for expanded co-operation in such sectors as transport, telecommunications, science and technology, the co-ordination of macro-economic policies and industrial property.

STRENGTHENING DEMOCRACY AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

We reaffirm the commitment of our Governments, which reflects the will of our peoples, to democracy and to full respect for human rights as proclaimed by the United Nations and the Organization of American States.

Full respect for human rights and the strengthening of representative democracy and peace in the region are indispensable conditions for our peoples' expression of their will through co-operation mechanisms designed to ensure their economic and social development.

We give our full support to the resolution entitled "Unity for the promotion of democracy", adopted at the most recent regular session of the OAS General Assembly, held at Asunción in June 1990.

We once again express our concern at the social situation in the region and renew our pledge to eradicate extreme poverty and improve health and education. In this connection, we attach the utmost importance to the Second Regional Conference on Poverty in Latin America, to be held at the presidential level at Guayaquil from 20 to 23 November 1990, following the preparatory meeting at Santiago on 17, 18 and 19 October 1990.

We also agree to develop mechanisms for exchanges of experience and co-ordinated action within the relevant organizations in order to find joint solutions to the problems of women who are victims of discrimination, youth, children, the elderly, the disabled and migrant workers.

THE INTER-AMERICAN SYSTEM

The ongoing expansion and consolidation of the democratic system in the hemisphere and the radical changes taking place on the world scene provide an auspicious framework for an in-depth review of the mechanisms of the inter-American system with a view to making it a more modern and dynamic tool. The primary objective of the countries of the region is to preserve their common heritage, which has been created over a century and reflects the principles set out in the Charter of the Organization of American States. We also reiterate our conviction that all States of the hemisphere must actively participate in the inter-American system.

In this context, full respect for the principles of the inter-American system, collective security within the region, critical poverty, external debt, protectionism, environmental conservation and illicit drug trafficking must be included in the list of issues requiring in-depth consideration with a view to the formulation of practical proposals for action that will benefit all peoples of the region. These are challenges that call for solutions which are fully consistent with the collective desire for peace, democracy, development and social justice.

THE SITUATION IN CENTRAL AMERICA

We express our satisfaction at the important progress made in Central America towards establishing firm and lasting peace in the region. We note the existence of a climate of agreement and a readiness for dialogue with a view to the reconciliation of the Central American peoples.

We note also the strengthening of democratic processes in the region and the political will displayed by the different sectors of Central American society that are striving to find a peaceful and democratic solution through dialogue. By the same token, we support the efforts being made as part of the process of dialogue set in motion by the National Reconciliation Commission of Guatemala created under the Esquipulas II agreement, efforts which have resulted in the holding of a number of meetings and the recent adoption of the Quito Declaration, which sets forth

basic guidelines for achieving peace, solidarity and the reconciliation of Guatemalan society.

We express our gratitude for the work done by the United Nations Observer Group in Central America (ONUCA) and the OAS International Support and Verification Commission (CIAV), whose contributions were decisive for completing the process of demobilizing and disarming the Nicaraguan Resistance.

We welcome the results achieved at the meeting of Central American Presidents held at Antigua, Guatemala, in June 1990, in particular the adoption of the Central American Economic Action Plan (PAECA) designed to promote the economic and social recovery of the Central American peoples.

We reiterate our interest in helping consolidate the peace process in the region and co-operating in its economic and social development.

THE AMERICAS INITIATIVE AND LATIN AMERICA'S GROWING LINKAGE TO THE GLOBAL ECONOMY

The Americas Initiative formulated by the United States President on 27 June is, in the present world situation, a positive proposal for the development of hemispheric relations and one which inspires us to work together in solidarity on equitable bases.

We must take a realistic approach to President Bush's proposal, which shows that he is willing to launch a process leading to closer economic, trade and financial ties with all the countries of Latin America.

This linkage of trade with investment and the debt represents a new approach by the United States to these ties but in our opinion the figures initially proposed are inadequate. We view as positive the inclusion of the Inter-American Development Bank in the United States initiative as a vehicle for financing debt-reduction programmes.

In any event, the disparity in levels of development between the Latin American countries and the United States will always have to be borne in mind.

The Initiative proposes close co-operation with Latin America in the Uruguay Round, with a view to promoting the long-term expansion of Latin American trade and the full incorporation of the region in the international economic system, and mentions the United States decision to try to secure more drastic tariff reductions in the current Round for products of special interest to Latin America. We take note of this co-operation, which we feel should be ongoing and should not end with the current negotiations. A meeting should be held between Latin American negotiators in the Uruguay Round and negotiators from the United States and Canada, in order to identify common ground on issues of interest to Latin America.

We also see the Initiative as a stimulus for new ideas and as complementing regional economic integration processes in Latin America. Accordingly, we advocate an exchange of information among our countries on the negotiations we are conducting among ourselves, with the United States and with other countries or regions.

We also see the Initiative as neither deviating from the principles underlying an open multilateral trading system nor preventing us from reaching out, as we must, to other regions of the world in the search for increased economic, financial and technological co-operation.

THE URUGUAY ROUND OF TRADE NEGOTIATIONS

The Uruguay Round must succeed because its success is crucial to a free, vigorous, non-discriminatory international trading system which is a positive contributing factor to development and growth. The negotiations must arrive at balanced results, take into account the interests of all participants and help strengthen the multilateral trading system.

An international trading system built on more equitable foundations is bound to enhance the well-being of countries which, while they may produce as much as or more than others, reap smaller benefits because of market restrictions. Such a system will also help to consolidate peace among peoples.

The negotiations must strengthen the rules and regulations governing international trade while adhering to the principles of fair competition, so that threats of unilateral action and the proliferation of so-called "grey area" measures are finally eliminated. No system of international trade regulation can, in the long run, be based either on restrictions or conditions which are hostile to free trade or on unfair ties and conquests from the past. Barriers of all kinds, tariff and especially non-tariff, and production and agricultural export subsidies which hinder exports from the developing world and their access to markets must be removed.

We feel that the liberalization of trade in agricultural products, textiles and by-products of natural products in their various stages of processing should work towards the removal of all barriers and distortions which hinder the access of developing countries to trade and weaken the impact of their comparative advantage in the global economy. We are against all restrictions and conditions, especially in respect of new items.

The Uruguay Round will not be successful and balanced if the industrialized countries disregard those justified demands which will guarantee fair international trade.

EXTERNAL DEBT

The persistence of the external debt problem is undermining the foundations of the political and economic stability of debtor countries. In real terms, the debt is continuing to mount because an overall solution has yet to be found to the core problem, resulting in a prolonged transfer of resources from the region.

We reiterate that the problem of Latin America's debt requires a political solution and, therefore, the adoption of measures commensurate with its implications. To that end, we feel that it is necessary, in so far as the situation in each country allows, to take into account the proposal recently agreed

to by the Latin American and Caribbean countries within the framework of the Latin American Economic System (SELA).

We therefore urge the Governments of creditor countries, the international financial organizations and private banks to intensify their efforts to find a comprehensive political solution to the debt problem which, with the flexibility appropriate to each case, attacks the problem at its roots.

CO-OPERATION WITH RESPECT TO ENERGY

The Gulf crisis has demonstrated the urgent need for joint action in the area of energy co-operation in our region, in order to ensure energy security for the hemisphere. In this connection, we propose to launch an energy initiative for Latin America which will reduce the potential economic and social impact of global conflicts and, within the framework of the Latin American Energy Organization (OLADE), to discuss what action should be taken to address the region's latest energy problems.

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Greater co-operation among our countries in scientific and technological research is vital for the economic and social development of the region.

To that end, the countries of the Group will propose that the Latin American Integration Association (ALADI) and the relevant agencies formulate specific proposals for:

1. The transfer of know-how from world centres of excellence.
2. The training and consolidation of our own human and infrastructure resources in science and technology.
3. The strengthening of existing bodies, which have already begun this process of co-operation within the region, and
4. The formulation of programmes and strategies for co-operation among scientific and technological production centres in our countries.

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

We attach high priority to the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development to be held at the highest level in Rio de Janeiro in June 1992. The Conference, while respecting the sovereign right to make rational use of natural resources, is expected to adopt comprehensive measures for limiting, neutralizing or reversing any processes which harm the global ecological balance. Our countries will contribute to the adoption of these measures in the interest of our present and future populations. At the same time we believe that the greatest efforts must be forthcoming from the developed countries. Since it is their models of industrialization and patterns of consumption that are the main causes of environmental deterioration, they bear a greater responsibility for finding a solution.

Whether our countries are able to take on specific commitments and participate effectively in international instruments, programmes and projects in the area of environmental protection will depend to a large extent on our having appropriate technology on accessible terms and additional financial resources.

We undertake to maintain ongoing co-ordination in multilateral forums on the environment with a view to harmonizing our positions and making them more effective. Our countries will participate actively in preparations for the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development and in the negotiation of international instruments on climate, biological diversity, the ozone layer and other issues on the international environmental agenda. To that end, we will exchange advance information through our Foreign Ministries on our countries' participation in the different meetings, taking into account the work that will be done at the subregional, regional and world levels.

ACTION TO COMBAT ILLICIT TRAFFICKING IN NARCOTIC DRUGS AND PSYCHOTROPIC SUBSTANCES

We reiterate our belief that the serious problem of the consumption and production of and illicit trafficking in narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances directly affects each of our countries' opportunities for national development, jeopardizes the living conditions of vast sectors of our societies and will be solved only through effective and sustained international co-operation.

We reassert that drug trafficking can be combated effectively only through a comprehensive policy and through multilateral measures which focus not only on suppression but also, essentially, on the political, economic and social dimensions of the problem.

We further reiterate that any action to combat problems related to the suppression of drug use, production, processing and trafficking, money laundering and illicit arms trafficking, ties to terrorist groups and the control of chemical precursors must be accompanied by effective action to promote the economic and social development of our countries.

We also reiterate that action to combat drug trafficking must be taken in strict compliance with the principles of international law, particularly those of non-intervention, respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of States and non-use or the threat of use of force in international relations.

Likewise, we confirm our fullest support for the Ixtapa Declaration and Programme of Action, an initiative that provides effective mechanisms for combating the scourge of drug trafficking on our continent.

GOVERNMENT REFORMS

We agree to exchange information and experience on government reforms because we feel that modernization of our government structures is a necessary pre-condition for the successful transformation of our economies.